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BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Household Manufactures in the United States, 1640-1860: A Study in Industrial History. By ROLLA M. TRYON. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1917. Pp. xii+413. \$2.00.

By the publication of this volume Professor Tryon has filled a gap in the industrial history of the United States, and especially in the history of manufactures. The field which he essays to cover had hitherto been neglected, the writers on manufactures usually interpreting that word in the popular rather than in the etymological meaning. The phrase "household manufactures" in Professor Tryon's book is defined to include only those articles made in the home or on the plantation by members of the family or plantation from raw material produced largely on the farm where the manufacturing was done. It does not include articles produced under the handicraft, shop, mill, or factory systems, each of which marks a subsequent stage in the development of manufactures in the United States.

As to the importance of this subject during the period covered there can be no question. The following quotation does not overstate its claims for consideration: "It is certainly no exaggeration to say that civilization could not have been maintained in sections of the New England and middle states during the colonial period, and on the frontier everywhere for several years after the appearance of the first settlement, without the system of household manufactures."

The task of collecting and winnowing the material and of assembling and interpreting it has been well done by the author. A clear picture is given of the characteristics of household manufactures, their place in the domestic economy, and their value in supplying the needs of the people. During the colonial period they were pursued from necessity and were local in scope. After 1765 they were definitely and purposely developed as a method of resistance to England's colonial policy. This development continued throughout the Revolution, suffered a sharp decline after the declaration of peace, but was revived again about 1790 and continued until our industrial independence was assured and the household manufactures were supplanted by the factory system.

One criticism may be made at this point. The author has failed to note a period of decline between about 1794 and 1807, during which the

profits of agriculture and commerce diverted the energies of the people from manufactures to those pursuits. After the embargo renewed impetus was given to manufacturing. But it is a mistake to treat the whole period from 1790 to 1810 as a unit. It is also questionable whether it was necessary to print almost one hundred pages of tables containing the results of the censuses of 1810, 1840, 1850, and 1860, especially as only slight reference is made to them in the text.

The study is a careful, able, and scholarly piece of work, which supplements admirably the recent *History of Manufactures* by Victor S. Clark. The further work to be done in this field must now consist of more intensive studies of particular industries, of which there exist already a few excellent ones, or of particular localities and periods. It is to be hoped Professor Tryon may find opportunity to exploit this field still further.

E. L. BOGART

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

The Food Problem. By VERNON KELLOGG and ALONZO E. TAYLOR.

New York: Macmillan, 1917. 8vo, pp. 212. Price \$1.25 net.

It is difficult to think of a contribution to the literature of the war which, if well done, would prove more timely and valuable than a discussion of "the food problem." We all know that food must be saved, but amid the conflicting industrial and military tendencies about us the "what," the "why," and the "how" of saving present to the layman many enigmas. Not all of us as yet realize that saving is a matter of production as well as of consumption, and that our limited agricultural resources must be used in the production of the highest food value. An adequate treatment of the whole matter in its manifold aspects, presenting in general terms a "food policy," should prove valuable to the legislator who must pass upon many questions of food control; to the administrator, who is charged alike with organizing the habits of consumers and of producers of food; to the speaker, who must preach food conservation in the land; to the consumer, whose eternal appetite is at the bottom of the problem; and to the producer, who wishes to turn his labor and the properties of his soil into staple food products with the least waste. Under present conditions a skilful presentation of so complicated a matter would call for congratulation to the authors for an invaluable service rendered the country. On the contrary an inadequate and bungling treatment merits the severest condemnation; for in the current crisis even heroic work, if ill-advised, cannot be excused under the catholic commendation of all things which are well meant.